In order to harness CBM potential in the country, government formulated a CBM policy in 1997. A total of 16 CBM blocks have been awarded so far (3 on nomination basis, 5 under CBM-I round and 8 under CBM-II round) for exploration and production of CBM. In addition, a dennonstration project named Coal Bed Methane Recovery and Commercial Utilization has been taken up in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project has been sanctioned by Government of India in September, 1999 and is under implementation at Sudamdih and Moonidih mines at BCCL. CIL and ONGC have decided to take up a project for establishing UCG technology. A draft MOU has already been approved by Board of Directors of CIL. Initial work of data exchange needed for identification of trial site has already been taken up.

NLC proposes to take up a UCG project in a suitable lignite block in Rajasthan under Ministry of Coal's S & T programme and Department of Science and Technology funding at a total cost of Rs. 1125 lakhs.

(c) and (d) The draft Vision Coal 2025 document prepared by Ministry of Coal in March, 2005 has assessed CBM production and production of gap from UCG equivalent to 25 million tonnes of coal by the year 2025. The draft document has been circulated to concerned Ministries/Departments and various other organizations for their comments to finalise the document.

Lack of security norms in coal mines;

†1896. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of accidents in coal mines has increased due to overlooking of safety norms; and

(b) the measures being taken by Government to prevent these accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) As reported by Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS), there has been marginal increase in the number of accidents in coal mines in recent years. Accidents in coal mines take place due to human error/negligence.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) To prevent the accidents and to improve the status of safety in mines, following measures are being taken by the coal companies:-

Thrust on training and retraining of workmen, supervisors and managers to increase safety awareness.

- Issue of guidelines for safer operations in identified thrust areas through circulars.
- Promoting participation of workers in safety management.
- Promoting self regulation by management.
- Tri-partite and Bi-partite review of safety status at various levels.
- Observance of safety week and safety compaigns.
- Generating safety awareness and information dissemination.
- National Conference on Safety in Mines.
- National Safety Awards.
- Interactions at different forums with a view to promote safety, health and welfare of persons employed in mines.
- Introduction to the concept of Risk Assessment, preparation of Safety Management Plan and development of Emergency Response System.
- Facilitating introduction of new technology in mining with low potential risk.

Post Offices closed in Gujarat

†1897. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:
SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the aim of Department of Posts is to provide services or to earn profit;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.